

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
Feb. 16, 2017
Department of Rehabilitation Services budget cuts and changes

Governor's H.B. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM
ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFORE

Good afternoon Senators Osten and Formica, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Katherine Pellerin and I am a registered voter in the historic town of Lebanon.

I am writing this testimony in strong opposition to the proposed budget **eliminating the Centers for Independent Living from the 2018-2019 biennium state budget.**

There is an old idiom, "Out of sight , out of mind" which sums up my feelings regarding this proposed budget. As President of both the Board of Directors for Disability Network of Eastern CT (DNEC - one of the Centers eliminated) as well as President of the Board for the State Independent Living Council (SILC), I am outraged by the fact that once again the budget is being balanced on the very backs of the most vulnerable citizens of this great State. Worse yet than eliminating money to the Centers, is the reality that the line item has been completely eliminated from print. Without the actual verbiage in the budget, we, as a vital part of the advocacy network, are now "out of mind" – to be forever lost and forgotten, now and in better financial times. I emphatically protest this. It goes against everything I value in my own life and all that I bring to the two agencies I represent. For almost 50 years as a nurse, licensed in the State of CT, I spent 30 of those years as a visiting nurse/ Hospice nurse which provided me with many opportunities to deal with, care for and provide advocacy for the many marginalized people with whom I came in contact. So – outraged is mild to what I feel in my heart.

We should not be forgotten. Not now, not ever. **I implore you to restore the Centers for Independent Living to the original modest funding level of \$529,000.**

Thank you for this opportunity to share my concerns. I'm proud to say I am a "born and raised" Connecticut resident. I hope to never lose that feeling of pride.

Katherine C. Pellerin BS, MS, RN
Lebanon, CT